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ABSTRACT

Within the education community there is a lack of consensus about how to define criteria to be used in assessing teacher qualifications. This report describes findings of a survey sent to all building administrators and district superintendents in the Kansas public schools (n=1,554). The survey elicited a total of 868 responses, 60 percent response rate. The instrument asked administrators which quality indicators they used in selecting K-12 teachers. The majority of respondents believed that today's first-year teachers were better prepared than those 5 years ago. Respondents ranked the following indicators of teacher quality as most important: unquestionable integrity and moral values, level of concern and caring for students, flexibility in working with students and colleagues, high energy and/or motivation level, oral communication skills, formal course work in computers and instructional technology, instructional creativity, willingness to consider divergent ideas, emotional stability, and superior ratings. The report offers the following recommendations for teacher selection: (1) Use objective information to supplement information on personal qualities; (2) broaden the concept of standards to include qualitative and personal characteristics; (3) examine selection criteria and practices to determine their impact on the K-12 teacher candidate pool; (4) make statements and policies more inclusive of all valid qualitative and quantitative indicators and personal attributes; and (5) share research information (between school administrators and teacher-preparation programs). The appendix contains a copy of the survey instrument. (Contains 54 references). (LMI)

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IMPROVING SCHOOLS: QUALITY INDICATORS USED WHEN SELECTING K-12 TEACHERS

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A CASE STUDY

by

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1996

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 3

Introduction/Background 6

Review of the Literature 12

Research Procedures and Results 23

Summary, Implications, and Recommendations 44

Bibliography 52

Appendix 57

Tables

Table 1: Summary of Respondents 24

Table 2: KSHSAA Size Classifications of Respondents' Districts 26

Table 3: Quality Indicator Means and Standard Deviations as reported by Subcategory 27

Table 4: Personal Qualities/Data as reported by School District Size 28

Table 5: Personal Qualities/Data as reported by Administrative Position 29

Table 6: Experience as reported by School District Size 29

Table 7: Experience as reported by Administrative Position 30

Table 8: Academic Preparation as reported by School District Size 30

Table 9: Academic Preparation as reported by Administrative Position 31

Table 10: Personal/Professional Development as reported by School District Size 31

Table 11: Personal/Professional Development as reported by Administrative Position 32

Table 12: Leadership Potential as reported by School District Size 32

Table 13: Leadership Potential as reported by Administrative Position 33

Table 14: Service Activities as reported by School District Size 33

Table 15: Service Activities as reported by Administrative Position 34

Table 16: Teaching Effectiveness/Potential as reported by School District Size 34

Table 17: Teaching Effectiveness/Potential as reported by Administrative Position 35

Table 18: Evidence of Scholarship as reported by School District Size 35

Table 19: Evidence of Scholarship as reported by Administrative Position 36

Table 20: Overall Quality Indicator Rankings 37

Table 21: Overall Importance Ranks of Data Sources/Procedures 38

Table 22: Preparation of First Year Teachers 39

Table 23: Quality Differences of Today's First Year Teachers 40

Table 24: Shortcomings of Today's First Year Teachers 42

Author's Note

The author gratefully acknowledges the consultant advice of Dr. Loren Tompkins, Professor of Educational Administration, on the research design and computer analysis of the data. Additionally, he is appreciative of the valuable interpretative assistance provided by Michael Scraper, Jones Institute Graduate Research Assistant.

Improving Schools: Quality Indicators Used When Selecting K-12 Teachers
Executive Summary

The interest and support for the nation's schools by its citizens has been rather pervasive for many years. This is reflected in the March 1996 education summit in Palisades, NY, which was convened by forty governors and forty-nine corporate chiefs to consider the establishment of competitive standards for the nation's schools. More recently, USA Today conducted a national poll of parents and students seeking their perceptions as to the quality of the schools in several areas. According to a 1996 publication by the Kansas State Board of Education titled *A Closer Look At The Results of Kansas School Improvement Programs*, Kansas has always been among the ten top states in education, but still has room for school improvements in many areas, even though there is systematic change underway which seeks to focus on results.

Nationwide, the professional literature indicates widespread recognition within the educational community that a well-qualified classroom teacher is a critical element of an excellent school. A lack of consensus exists, however, as to which data elements utilized in the selection process of a well-qualified teacher are essential and valid, yet objective and predictive in nature. This fact, in conjunction with the author's previous experiences in seeking to identify valid indicators of quality among K-12 programs, classroom teachers, and teacher education programs, led to the decision to undertake a research project involving the appropriate administrators in each of the public school systems in Kansas.

The author developed an original survey instrument titled *Quality Indicators Used When Selecting K-12 Grade Teachers*, a copy of which is included in the appendix. This instrument was comprised of 57 quality indicators, a 16 item section devoted to data sources/procedures, and a question asking for quality comparisons of today's first years teachers with those prepared prior to 1990. The 57 indicators of quality were placed in the following eight categories: academic preparation, experience, personal qualities, documentation of teaching effectiveness, evidence of scholarship, service activities, personal/professional development and leadership qualities. The respondents were asked to rank each of the indicators according to importance and use, and then to rank order the ten most important indicators of quality. Additionally, the respondents were asked to rank order the five most important sources of data/procedures which are used in the selection process.

The survey instrument was mailed February 15, 1996, to all building administrators and district superintendents within each of the 304 public school districts in Kansas resulting in 1,554 administrators being surveyed. A total of 868 completed surveys were returned resulting in a response rate of 55.9%, which is unusually high for this type of survey

especially since it was mailed during an extremely busy time period for administrative personnel.

Demographic descriptive data of the survey on the school systems and respondents were obtained in Part I of the instrument. A summary, by administrative position, of the usable responses is as follows: elementary principal-304, superintendent-198, high school principal-155, junior high/middle school principal-95, and combined grades-63. Part II of the instrument was comprised of the listed 57 quality indicators which were grouped into the previously mentioned eight categories: academic preparation, experience, personal qualities, documentation of teaching effectiveness, evidence of scholarship, service activities, personal/professional development, and leadership potential qualities. The respondents rated, on a five point scale, each of the indicators as to importance and frequency of use. These indicator ratings, when grouped by sub category and reported as means, resulted in the following rank order of the sub categories: personal qualities/data, experience, academic preparation, personal/professional development, leadership potential, service activities, documentation of teaching effectiveness and evidence of scholarship. Additional specific data pertaining to these ratings are reported in the section on research procedures and results.

Some very interesting results emanated from Part III of the instrument, in which the respondents listed in rank order, the ten most important items. Although there are some discrete differences depending upon the position of the respondent and the size of the district where the respondent was employed, in general, the most important indicators of quality were: *unquestionable integrity and moral values, level of concern and caring for children/youth, flexibility in working with students and colleagues, high energy/and or motivation level, oral communication skills, formal course work in computer usage and instructional technology, creativity in implementing instruction, willingness to consider divergent ideas/concepts, emotional stability, and supervisor statements/ratings.*

When the respondents compared today's first year teachers to those prepared five years ago they reported that today's teachers are better prepared than those prepared prior to 1990, with 72.3% indicating that they were either much better prepared or somewhat better prepared. In responding to qualitative items from this section of the instrument, administrators indicated that recent graduates have greater competence relating to instructional, methodological, and motivational issues than did those graduating from teacher education programs prior to 1990. Also, there is a commonly held belief that today's first year teachers are better prepared in the areas of computers and instructional technology. When administrators were asked to list any shortcomings, they identified deficiencies in the areas of discipline and classroom management, and attitudinal and work ethic issues as exemplified in an unwillingness to devote extra time necessary for

class preparation and extracurricular activities. It indeed is very encouraging to learn that administrators are quite impressed with the overall competence of recent graduates.

Recommendations

1. Since school administrators highly value quality indicators which emanate from personal qualities, it is essential that they utilize cogent objective information, and data sources not necessarily now available to them in order to further clarify the attributes of these same personal qualities.

2. Those interested in improving the quality of K-12 schools, whether they are representatives of the business community, elected and appointed governmental officials, philanthropic organizations, parent groups, accrediting agencies, educational professionals as well as others who are advocates of high standards, need to broaden their concept of standards to include many additional qualitative and personal characteristics.

3. If the rich diversity of our American society is to be reflected in the K-12 schools, with a concomitant commitment to educate *all* children, K-12 and IHE (Institutions of Higher Education) administrators need to examine carefully their selection criteria, data sources, interview practices, and procedures to ascertain any possible differential impact upon the size, characteristics, and quality of the K-12 teacher candidate pool.

4. National and state accrediting agencies, professional organizations, and others seeking to establish and implement high and rigorous standards for education should carefully scrutinize their statements and policies so as to be more inclusive of all valid qualitative and quantitative indicators and personal attributes.

5. The administrators of K-12 schools, and teacher preparation programs, irrespective of size or location, need to regularly exchange and provide research information as to the best selection procedures/practices, data sources and quality indicators which predict subsequent teacher success and/or retention.

Since the respondents found the original survey instrument *"Quality Indicators Used When Selecting K-12 Grade Teachers"* to be valid and quite comprehensive, the instrument is an extremely valuable resource for those desirous of preparing or employing well qualified teachers as well as those developing policies pertaining thereto. The information embodied in Parts II and IV will be very beneficial in enhancing both the quality dimensions of the teacher as a professional and the eventual qualitative employment decisions.

Improving Schools: Quality Indicators Used When Selecting K-12 Teachers

Introduction/Background

The interest and support for the nation's schools by the citizenry, in general has been rather pervasive for many years. A January, 1996, *USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll* (Parents, Students Grade, 1996) found that education was of higher priority than the economy or crime. This has been especially true in Kansas, which according to a recent publication of the Kansas State Board of Education (1996), the State has always been among the top ten states in education. As is indicated in the aforementioned report, in 1989 the Kansas State Board of Education undertook a futuristic perspective by shifting its focus to results with accompanying changes in the state's accreditation system, student assessments, and the establishment of curricular standards. Concomitantly, the enactment of the 1992 School District Finance and Quality Performance Act required the state board of education to develop standards for student learning in four academic areas, and at the various grade levels. It was believed that said standards would make it possible to make valid comparisons with the achievements in other states, and at the national level.

However, historically speaking, it is interesting to note that concurrent with this support for the schools there have been numerous critics. America's dissatisfaction with its schools is prevalent and continuous in nature. Teachers and their quality, or lack thereof, are often the focal point of these discussions. There have been a plethora of national and state reports and a series of recommendations positing significant and diverse educational reform strategies. There is no question that these reports have had, and continue to have, considerable influence on all efforts to make improvements in the nation's schools, including Kansas, which purports to be one of the leaders of educational change and improvement. These reports have been generated by representatives from the business community, elected and appointed governmental officials, educational professionals and researchers, philanthropic organizations, parent groups, and a variety of professional organizations to mention a few. Perhaps the most influential of these endeavors was *A Nation at Risk* published in 1983 as the final report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. This commission had been convened by Education Commissioner Terrel Bell. The report stated that "...the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation...". (p.5) Also the report included this statement, "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war." (p.5) Although much has been achieved since that landmark report was issued, there remains

a continuing concern for the quality of schools, private as well as public.

A Nation at Risk, as a federal report, evoked a series of national reform initiatives including a compendium of written responses and formal reports. Unfortunately, well intended reform efforts often end with the publication of a report. Surprisingly, the plight of the classroom teacher, although a critical element of the education enterprise, has received only a minimum amount of national attention, except for some rather isolated and proposed remedies which tended to be simplistic in nature. Perhaps this is because education, legally, is seen as a responsibility of the individual states. There were some notable exceptions, some of which will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow.

One significant effort to effect national reform of teacher education had its origin in 1989. A small group of presidents and deans of education from institutions with a major commitment to teacher education met to consider the future role that institutions of this type might play in the national efforts to improve teacher education. After a series of meetings the group concluded that "schools and the university programs that prepare teachers and other educators for these schools have not, unfortunately, changed as quickly as necessary to reflect the demands of a changing social environment." (Renaissance Group, 1989, p. 2). In July 1992 the group named itself the Renaissance Group and identified a set of nineteen principles for the preparation of teachers in a quality program. Emporia State University is a participating member of the Renaissance Group, which requires the active involvement of the university president, the dean of education, and the vice president for academic affairs.

Several of the reform reports were quite critical of teacher preparation programs in general and alluded to their lack of quality in somewhat disparaging terms. Coincidentally with the issuance of *A Nation at Risk*, a small number of deans of education in research-oriented universities were holding discussion sessions pertaining to their perceptions of the inadequacies of and issues associated with the quality of teacher education. This small group of deans, with Judith Lanier, then the dean of the College of Education at Michigan State University, serving in a leadership role, formulated a reform agenda and plan. The results of these initial efforts were published as *Tomorrow's Teachers* in 1986 and a consortium, known as the Holmes Group, of more than ninety universities was formed in 1987. As of this date, the Holmes Group, although with a somewhat modified agenda, continues to function. The deans have assumed responsibility for setting the agenda and through a variety of means involve the academic vice presidents, the deans from arts and sciences, education faculty, and public school personnel.

Also in 1986, the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession issued its report entitled *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, which recommended the

creation of a national board. Such a group, titled the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was established a year later to delineate high and rigorous standards for what experienced teachers should know and be able to do. The NBPTS has as its goal the establishment of a national voluntary system to assess and certify experienced teachers who meet its standards and to advance related educational reforms, but left to the respective states the responsibility for licensing systems. However, the NBPTS (1990, p. 1) did state, "Good teaching is neither obvious nor simplistic. Thorough knowledge of subject and student is necessary, as is sound professional judgement and the ability to convey complex material in ways that students can understand." It is obvious that excellent teachers are an essential ingredient in what people perceive as quality schools. The NBPTS continues to be a viable reform effort, having recently received additional financial support from the federal government. During the past three years the Jones Institute for Educational Excellence at Emporia State University has worked as a field-test site, and has now established the Great Plains Center for National Teacher Certification.

Although several individual institutions were actively engaged in program revisions and improvement strategies, their overall modifications were related to curricular design and delivery systems. There tended to be little emphasis upon the quality dimensions of the teacher as a professional or the other indicators of quality as students were recruited for and/or admitted to a preparation program. Some research has been done relative to the general lists of criteria for teacher selection, but little, if any, on delineating the specific indicators of quality. Furthermore, not much is known about quality indicators, their use, or relative importance.

According to Castetter, (1981) the selection of teachers is one of the most important functions of school administrators, primarily because its impact is greater on school effectiveness than any other single factor. He also states that proper selection helps to minimize dissipation of time, effort, and funds that must be invested to develop a new teacher, and/or engage in the termination/replacement process. Castetter (1981, p. 157) states, "Unsatisfactory results in the selection are frequently due to misapplication or to non application of modern selection techniques. All too often personnel are chosen on the basis of politics, nepotism, popularity, physiognomy, propinquity, seniority, physical fitness, compromise, hero worship, ethnic background, natural secession, test results, personality traits, and salesmanship." Conversely, it is crucial that competency and objectivity be paramount in the selection of teachers.

According to Bacharach & Conley, (1986) who have stated that the problem in the schools lies with the teachers, citizens cannot expect the schools to improve significantly unless competent qualified teachers are selected. It is logical to assume that the consequences of the selection of new teachers also has a tremendous impact upon the

community at large as well. Seivers (1989) says that the employment of new teachers should be given highest priority, but "is often awarded little time proportionate to other responsibilities." (p.3) Further, she says "administrators in the trenches, who are charged with selection, may fall back on procedures which they believe have worked well for them in the past. Indeed the procedures and criteria are as varied as the school districts employing them. Just as teaching itself is a complex enterprise, teacher selection is also very complex." (p.3) The objective of the selection process is to employ individuals who will be successful on the job. Self-evident as this purpose may appear, its implementation requires a rather thorough process and valid criteria.

Previously this author, when studying the employment of university teachers, reported that the qualitative decisions related to faculty employment usually are predicated upon varied and disparate data. These data are presumed to be indicators of quality. This author (Moore, 1987, p. 43) recounted, "A review of information sources indicates rather clearly that there is a definite lack of consensus as to the essential and valid data elements to be used in these processes. Conrad and Blackburn (1986) accurately portray this by stating that there is a lack of agreement about the concept of quality itself but pointed to differences as to what, in fact, goes into the making of something of high quality."

Much has been written about additional research being needed in the area of who teaches and why they teach. If we are to have a more comprehensive view of the current and future status of the teachers in our schools, a number of varying knowledge bases need to be combined. Specifically, Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996, p. 96-97), write; "Research is needed to further explain the manner in which local and state recruitment and hiring practices influence attractions to teaching, the status of the profession, and supply and demand trends, as well as how local and state recruitment and hiring policies enhance or undermine the success of promising recruitment policies and whether problems are more likely to show up in particular locales or schools."

The continuing concern and interest in improving the K-12 public schools was once again manifested when an education summit was convened on March 26-27, 1996, in Palisades, NY. As was anticipated, the forty state governors and forty nine corporate chiefs in attendance agreed to pursue the establishment of internationally competitive standards for the schools with accompanying assessments. Further, the CEOs indicated that they would directly rely on the school based records and diplomas when making judgments about the quality of their graduates with increased emphasis on achievement as reflected in standardized test scores. There appears to be widespread recognition, in the professional literature and the educational community, that a critical element in an excellent school is what is perceived to be a well-qualified classroom teacher. However, there is a definite lack of consensus as to the essential and valid data elements to be used in the initial employment process which are also objective and predictive in nature. This

fact led to the decision to undertake a research project involving the appropriate administrators in each of the school systems in Kansas. The summary data from this research would be of value to:

1. school systems in their efforts to employ and/or develop quality teachers,

2. teacher educators in general who are interested in improving or designing high quality teacher preparation programs,

3. accrediting agencies as they seek to identify indicators of quality of graduates from preparation programs,

4. Kansas teacher educators as they develop outcomes based preparation programs, and,

5. the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in its effort to identify indicators of quality for experienced teachers.

Project Design --The conceptual framework for the data gathering efforts included the need for an instrument that had both content and construct validity which would embody an efficacious approach of obtaining cogent information pertaining to the initial employment and characteristics of Kansas K-12 teachers. Since such an instrument was not in existence, an original survey instrument titled *Quality Indicators Used When Selecting K-12 Grade Teachers* was developed and pilot tested by Moore and Weber in December, 1995. This new instrument is a modification of the instruments previously used by Moore (1987), and Moore and England (1992) in their earlier research on quality and indicators of quality. In developing this revised instrument, Moore not only undertook an extensive literature review, but also interviewed several institution of higher education (IHE) faculty and administrators from different types of institutions, public school administrative personnel, representatives from state and national accrediting agencies, and human resources personnel from a major national corporation. Also, the publications of a company which had scientifically researched and validated an educator selection system were carefully reviewed, and interviews with selected users of the system were conducted. Additionally, the materials of a personnel profiling system, which purported to help select the best qualified employees, were reviewed and their value was discussed with one of its users. The information obtained from these varied sources was incorporated into a four page instrument comprised of six parts which will be described in the section to follow. The complete instrument can be found in the appendix.

Instrument -- In its final form, the six-part instrument titled *Quality Indicators Used When Selecting K-12 Teachers* was comprised of 57 quality indicators, a 16 item section devoted to data sources/procedures, and a question asking for comparisons of today's first year teachers to those prepared five years ago. (Appendix A) Part I asked the respondent to provide general information pertaining to the type of administrative position held, highest degree earned, and years of experience as a school administrator. Also, demographic descriptive data on the school system as to its size, e.g. number of students and teachers, location e.g. rural, small city, suburban, urban, inner city, and organizational structure e.g. elementary, middle, junior high or high school was sought. The 57 indicators of quality were listed in Part II and were placed in the following eight categories: academic preparation, experience, personal qualities/data, documentation of teaching effectiveness, evidence of scholarship, service activities, personal/professional development, and leadership potential qualities. The administrators were asked to indicate the *use* of each of the 57 quality indicators in making final employment decisions by using the following five point rating scale: 5- always used, 4- frequently used, 3- used occasionally, 2- seldom used, 1- never used. Secondly, the administrators were asked to rate the *importance* of each quality indicator by using the following scale: 5- extremely important-essential, 4- very important, 3- important, 2- of some importance, 1- of little or no importance.

In Part III, the administrator was to rank order the ten most important of the 57 quality indicators listed in Part II. Part IV was a section in which the respondent had the opportunity to list any quality indicators which may have been omitted in developing the list of 57 quality indicators. Part V asked for the identification of the five most important sources of data and/or procedures that are used when hiring teachers. Data on the comparisons of today's first year teachers to those prepared five years ago were sought in Part VI which asked for ratings on the following five point scale: 1- much better prepared, 2- somewhat better prepared, 3- about the same in preparation, 4- not quite as well prepared, 5- not nearly as well prepared. Part VI also asked the respondent to explain or describe quality differences and to list the major shortcomings of today's first years teachers. This original instrument was designed for mailing to the school district superintendents and the respective administrators at each of the public school attendance centers in Kansas.

Review of the Literature

Strong evidence suggests that our nation's public schools are not meeting the expectations of parents, business leaders, government officials, and other policy leaders. Consequently teachers, those that prepare teachers, and those who have the responsibility for selecting teachers for school systems need to carefully assess their respective roles in improving the overall quality of the educational process in the nation's public schools.

Logically speaking, there is a direct relationship between the knowledge base of the preparation of teachers and the criteria that are subsequently utilized in the selection of teachers for schools and school systems. As David Imig in *The Teachers Educator's Handbook* (Murray, Ed., 1996) so succinctly and aptly states, "An unprecedented sequence of federal and state policy initiatives now promotes the 'systemic reform' of education from early childhood through postsecondary education. Related initiatives of the national discipline organizations have produced standards for student and teacher performance, with standards-based accountability structures now being created in many locations. Within the sphere of teacher preparation, state policy shifts have begun significantly to alter the structure of licensure and its connection to an evolving system of professional certification, as well as to draw accreditation more firmly into the configuration of educational quality control measures." (p. xii) Imig goes on to state that the *Handbook* effectively addresses the implications arising from the knowledge base that supports teaching and learning as well as the larger context of current policy structures and standards-based accountability. In the same publication, Murray (Ed., 1996), in making reference to how the context of teacher education has changed since the *A Nation at Risk* report says; "The goals of the major educational reform groups...demand a more ambitious kind of teaching in the public schools, which is difficult to learn and is dependent on an unusual kind of knowledge." (p. xvi) He also states: "Part Two presents issues, findings, and questions about approaches to teaching some of the major disciplines; all teacher educators...will need to consider these issues and questions as they raise the education requirements for future teachers." (p. xvi) It is obvious that the continuing changes in the nature and contexts of schooling, especially its governance and intended outcomes, mandate a serious examination of teacher preparation programs.

Several writers have sought to contrast the various education reform reports that have been issued since *A Nation at Risk*. Many of the earlier reports emphasized certain content, a particular structure or program, tests and other reforms of 'accountability'. Darling-Hammond and Cobb (Sikula, Buttery, & Guyton, Eds., 1996) allude to the "second wave" of reforms as those which tended to focus on the need to professionalize teaching with an emphasis on the importance of the teachers' knowledge and the nature of the milieu in which teachers must function. These authors state: "The recruitment,

preparation, licensure, and renewal of a competent teaching force are now widely recognized as among the central policy issues now facing the United States in its educational reform efforts." (p.15) They and other authors make it rather clear that it is essential for schools to ensure that all children can learn. Such an expectation will require teachers to have additional knowledge and quite different skills than their predecessors. In 1988, Wise and Darling-Hammond wrote that to develop the capacities which teachers in the twenty-first century must have there will need to be major restructuring of the systems by which states and school districts license, hire, induct, support, and provide the continual learning of teachers. Included in these new capacities will be compliance with standard-setting efforts of the national professional organizations as well as those being established by federal and state governmental agencies. Consequently, it is quite apparent that valid and reliable indicators of quality for such teachers are unquestionably needed.

In *Teachers for the Nation's Schools*, Goodlad (1991) observes that teacher education must "either continue to take its cues almost exclusively from practitioners of the craft or open itself up to the research and theory of those who inquire into it." (p.30) Recently Goodlad has established a network of selected universities and schools to implement his delineated dimensions of teaching which unites research and theory with practice. Another interesting consortium, known as the Project 30 Alliance, is comprised of thirty institutions of higher education, including Emporia State University, with the faculties of education, and arts and sciences are working together in the reform process. It is a collaborative curriculum redesign endeavor with the intent to graduate 'better educated, better prepared teachers.'

Much has been written on how teacher candidates in fact become good or excellent teachers. Several of the reports on educational reform stipulate that the acquisition of academic content knowledge, as reflected in an academic major and/or a high grade point average, is basic to being a well qualified teacher. Kennedy (1991) has completed some interesting research on this topic. She indicates that the reform movement in American education is becoming more directed toward giving students deeper understanding of subject matter and greater facility with reasoning as well as finding ways to engage all children with important academic content. Kennedy says, while these ideas sound good in the reports of blue-ribbon commissions, they raise difficult questions about how teachers can learn these things. She summarizes her findings this way: "One thing we have learned is that majoring in an academic subject in college does not guarantee that teachers will have the kind of subject matter knowledge they need for teaching. When we contrast teachers who majored in a subject with others who did not, we find that the majors are often no more able than other teachers to explain fundamental concepts in the discipline. This is probably the most surprising finding from the study, and one that seems counterintuitive." (1991, p. 14) Kennedy also found that specific courses

designed to help teachers better understand the cultures of the various groups did not enhance a teacher's ability to teach children who are members of these different groups. Kennedy also found that, despite their intentions to do otherwise, new teachers teach as they were taught. She also reported that differences among teacher candidates at the end of their preservice programs seemed to be influenced by their entering beliefs and knowledge, and by the conceptual orientation of the program, but not so much by the structural arrangement of the program.

More recently, Kennedy, (In Murray, Ed., 1996), in her discussion of research genres, reports some interesting findings on what might be construed as quality indicators when selecting teachers. She indicated that Hanushek in 1972 found that neither college major nor the number of credits teachers had taken were significantly related to the achievement of their students, but that the teachers' general verbal ability and the recency of their last educational experience were significantly related. Kennedy also cited the work of Murnand and Phillips who found that teacher behaviors were better predictors of student achievement than were teacher characteristics. In 1993 Ferguson and Womack found substantial relationships between the teacher education courses that teacher candidates took and the quality of teaching they demonstrated. Veenman (1984) as reported by Kennedy, reviewed teacher-felt problems as found in a follow-up study and learned that classroom discipline and motivating students were most frequently mentioned. As one Kansas administrator opined 'students don't care what you know until they know you care.'

The question as to what constitutes or leads to an excellent teacher is fundamental to much of the research or reform in education. Often the answers received are different depending upon the traditions relating to the approach used in the research effort. If the researcher uses a process-product paradigm, which addresses the behaviors of the teacher and student as well as the achievement test scores of the learners you will have one description of a good teacher. Brophy and Good (1986) report in the *Handbook of Research on Teaching* that an effective classroom teacher is one who is well organized, efficient, task oriented, businesslike, clear, enthusiastic, direct, in control and fostering a convergence of learning outcomes. Clark and Peterson (1986), who do research on teacher's thinking, describe an effective teacher by focusing on the attributes of the teacher's thoughts, plans, decisions, and a functioning reflective professional. One of the newer approaches to research on teaching focuses on teacher knowledge which is based on the premise that one cannot teach what one does not understand. Critics of this research premise refer to the teacher who is a master of an academic discipline, but yet lacks the ability to effectively communicate the essence of such knowledge to students. Shulman (1987), a noted researcher, describes the assumptions related to research on teacher knowledge by listing the seven types of knowledge that excellent teachers have: content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; curriculum knowledge; pedagogical

content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts; and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values.

Rebore (1989) has written extensively on the teacher selection process. He states that the primary objective is to hire individuals who will be successful on the job, but that the implementation of a successful screening/hiring policy requires a substantial undertaking. The acquisition of personnel is a major expenditure for most school districts and if it does not result in an effective employee, the cost to the district is often incalculable because of the expense of the termination process, and the employment of a different individual. Further Rebore says that the selection criteria which are usually established tend to be somewhat idealistic in nature, but if possessed by an individual to the fullest degree would ensure successful performance. Usually these criteria become a method of quantifying the opinions of several individuals, and thus provide the documentation needed to assure that the school is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. According to Lunenburg (1995), affirmative action programs, designed to increase employment opportunities for women and minority groups, put pressure on administrators to ensure that females and other minorities (including veterans, the aged, and the handicapped) are employed in proportion to their actual availability in the area labor market. Both he and Rebore state that the interview is the most widely used personnel technique in the selection process, but in spite of its widespread use, it is a poor predictor of success on the job. It is their view that the interview leads to premature employment decisions, often occurring during the first few minutes of the discussion and before all relevant information has been gathered. The interviewer tends to spend the rest of the interview seeking information that confirms an initial impression. Lunenberg states that some interviewers are overly impressed with surface signs of composure, manner of speech, and physical appearance. These factors, in conjunction with preconceptions and prejudices about people, often reflect negatively against some minorities or in favor of those candidates who have backgrounds similar to the interviewers. Perhaps this lack of affectivity is an important factor in reducing the effectiveness of the interview in selecting quality teachers.

According to Guthrie and Reed (1991), when it comes to allocating time, a leader can spend few more productive hours than those devoted to the selection of personnel. They say, "even given the complexities of recruitment, induction and setting expectations, the initial choice of 'people' is a crucial level for shaping an institution." (p.15) It is also interesting to note that school districts use tests infrequently as an employment device. Perhaps this is due to the fact that EEOC guidelines and amendments to the Civil Rights Act prohibit employment practices that artificially discriminate against individuals on the basis of test score. A cogent example of the needed cautions associated with the use of standardized test scores can be found in the *Guidelines for Proper Use of NTE Tests* (Educational Testing Service, 1992). The publishers of the National Teachers

Examination state that school districts may not use NTE tests to rank order individual applicants for any purpose, including employment selection. Additionally, the districts are subjected to the same requirements as official state agencies are when the NTE scores are used for credentialing purposes. Seivers states that much of the teacher selection research is predicated on the research of industrial and organizational psychologists.

A study completed by Brandon (1982) found that superintendents and principals differed significantly in their perceptions and criteria for teacher selection. However, the size of the school system seemed unrelated to their perceptions of the design, attitude, and outcome of the selection process. Recently Seivers (1989) completed a rather comprehensive study on the role of administrator perception in the selection process of first year teachers. She found that the process is greatly influenced by four factors which shape criteria, namely, conditions in the context, administrator perception of context, administrator self-perception, and evaluation of selection products. Seivers concluded that, "selection criteria and selection process interacted with each other and shaped the selection decision which was ultimately based on the selecting administrator's perception that the candidate was congruent with the context." (p.137). Seivers explained this congruence by stating that this means selecting "someone like me." (p.138)

In 1984, Engel and Erion (In Sievers, 1989) asserted that the creation of a generalized list of preferred characteristics was an impossibility. They felt that being a teacher was in reality a very complex undertaking that tended to be linked to local conditions of each context, including the values, attitudes, philosophy, and goals of individuals within the context under consideration. Bredson (In Sievers, 1989) tends to concur, concluding that personnel screening and selection is a very complicated process involving a plethora of types of information. Perhaps this is why *The 24th Annual Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Poll of the Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools* (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1992) found that getting good teachers was a serious problem. They reported that five percent of the respondents indicated that it was the biggest problem with which the schools must deal, thereby making it the seventh of the twenty-five biggest problems. A similar situation prevailed when the survey was conducted one year later (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1993).

As has been previously indicated, this writer, in the development of a survey instrument for this study, interviewed current Kansas school administrators. Some of these administrators indicated that the Selection Research Incorporation (SRI) Teacher Perceiver was used by certain Kansas school systems. As a consequence it thus became an item in said instrument. Additionally, technical information was obtained from SRI Gallup, the publisher of the Teacher Perceiver Interview (TPI). To arrive at a conclusion about teacher attitudes and values, SRI devised the Teacher Perceiver Interview. According to Savage (SRI Gallup, 1996) the TPI, which is comprised of 60 open-ended

questions, was developed to provide a more valid basis for the use of interviews in the selection of those teachers who build rapport with students and stimulate their efforts to learn. Savage concludes "the evidence as presented...supports the use of the TPI for teacher selection in those situations in which it is desirable to employ teachers who establish rapport with students, activate students to become involved in the learning process, dedicate themselves to helping students learn, and are models of goal oriented people. There is nothing in the instrument that will guarantee that high scorers are masters of the content to be taught or that they have mastered appropriate methodology...Employers will want to supplement TPI scores with other data to round out their picture of prospective employees." (p.13) The fact that school administrators continue to trust their own criteria over those created professionally indicates that such an approach is not necessarily the best answer.

Seivers undertook an extensive literature review in conjunction with her dissertation and found that initially the criteria for selecting teachers were knowledge of the subject matter and a desire to teach, with the greatest emphasis upon a willingness to teach. She also stated that much of the teacher selection research is predicated on the research of industrial and organizational psychologists. As reported by Seivers (1989, p.13), Henry, in 1982, after a literature review listed the ten most significant criteria used in the selection of initial teachers as being:

1. Interview--process of mutual inquiry between two individuals related to selection for employment,
2. Credentials--letters of recommendations, resume,
3. Attitudes--toward teaching, toward students, in general,
4. Knowledge--subject matter, teaching competencies, in general,
5. Personal Qualities--appearance, enthusiasm, initiative, warmth, integrity, poise, maturity,
6. Communication Skills--spoken, written, nonverbal,
7. Student Teaching Performance--classroom management, effectiveness, rapport, ability to plan,
8. Interests--extracurricular activities as college student, and as a teacher,
9. Scholastic Record--grade point, honors, degree,
10. Biographical Data--age, sex, marital status, ethnicity.

Sievers reported on the research efforts of Johnson and Prom-Jackson who did their work in 1986. They found that the dominant set of characteristics for teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels were social and interpersonal skills, and affective characteristics. Their findings further indicated that student academic growth occurred only as a result of the interpersonal and effectiveness characteristics. In describing a study completed by Webb, Sievers states that the teacher competencies of classroom

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management, vitality and enthusiasm, subject matter competency, instructional design, teaching skills, effective interpersonal skills, and demonstration of professional behavior were paramount. Additionally, emphasis was also placed on integrity, emotional adjustment, and personal appearance. She also states that enthusiasm, dedication, and creativity are the traits that invariably appear on nearly every list of criteria for teachers. Seivers reported that Schmitt, when discussing the interview as a selection criteria, found that selection decisions are often made in the first four minutes; that interviewers give different weighting to information and possess stereotypes of idealized candidates; that non-verbal cues are more important than verbal and that attitudinal and racial similarities between the interviewer and interviewee affect evaluations and the final decision.

This strongly suggests a direct relationship between the selection criteria for teacher education programs and the qualifications, or quality of the program graduates. Haberman (1996), who has extensively studied teacher education admission criteria, states that the criteria have not changed in any important way in the past 25 years. He reports that the five most frequently used criteria are college grades, English proficiency, speech proficiency, academic references, and direct experiences with children/youth. Haberman states that GPA is the dominant criterion, primarily because faculty and admission officers are wary of legal problems and the inability to indicate what would or should keep a student with a high GPA from entering a program. He also indicates that there is no research connection between high GPA and teacher effectiveness. Haberman summarizes it this way: "This widespread practice of keeping GPA as the dominant criterion supports the contention that the selection criteria in traditional programs of teacher education are used to select successful university students, not effective teachers, and to avoid the hassle of too many appeals and lawsuits." (p.754)

At this juncture the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has sole responsibility for the national accreditation of college and university units for the preparation of teachers and other professional school personnel at the K-12 levels. It has throughout the 1980's and 1990's functioned effectively in a context of proactive response to the national demand for education reform. NCATE (1995) states that policy makers and the public are calling for national standards for what children should know and be able to do. Similarly, teachers will need to meet high professional standards. As a consequence NCATE has developed and refined a series of standards which are guided by a vision of quality.

An important NCATE standard is II.A which addresses the qualifications of candidates this way: "The unit recruits, admits, and retains candidates who demonstrate potential for professional success in school." (p.21) In the indicators section of the standard, reference is made to the need for a comprehensive system to assess the candidate's qualifications with this explication: "The criteria for admission to initial teacher

preparation programs include an assessment of academic proficiency (e.g. basic skills proficiency tests) faculty recommendations, biographical information, and successful completion of any prior college/university course work with at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA) on a 4-point scale." (p.21) Other indicators include incentives and affirmative procedures to attract candidates with high academic and other qualifications that demonstrate the potential for professional success in school. Since, according to Haberman (1996), the admission criteria for teacher education programs have remained relatively unchanged during the past twenty-five years, it is reasonable to conjecture that there have been few attempts to truly examine or consider possible relationships between admission criteria and employment criteria. Clear evidence to support this contention can be found by contrasting the most important employment criteria as recognized by this research study (e.g. personal qualifications) with the admission criteria which tend to be very academic in nature.

NCATE Standard II.D states that: "The unit ensures that a candidate's competency to begin his or her professional role in schools is assessed prior to completion of the program and recommendation for licensure." (p.23) One of the published indicators of having met this standard is: "The unit establishes and publishes a set of criteria/outcomes for exit from each professional education program." (p.23) Obviously, institutions should be desirous of having a very high correlation between its published set of criteria for program completers with those indicators of quality which public school systems use when they select teachers. Conversely, school systems and their employing officials would find these published quality indicators of considerable value as they initiate the recruitment and selection process for teachers and other professional personnel. Undoubtedly, this information would make it possible to make some initial determinations as to whether graduates from a particular program would be successful in their respective school systems. It is doubtful that those involved in designing preparation programs seek or utilize the quality indicators which K-12 administrators rely upon when employment decisions are being made.

An analysis, even if only cursory in nature, of the various national education reform reports emanating from representatives of the business community, elected and appointed officials, philanthropic organizations, and varied professional associations would quickly reveal nearly total unanimity on a need for much greater emphasis on the intellectual proclivity of teachers. Similarly, this is ostensible as the basic rationale for the current emphasis on standards as reflected in the outcomes of the March 1996 education summit and many of the recent recommendations and decisions of policy makers at local, state, and national levels. Academic achievement is definitely seen by these groups as an important, if not the most important, indicator of quality in a teacher.

As was indicated in the literature review, Darling-Hammond and Sclan (Sikula, Buttery, & Guyton, Eds., 1996) have stated that the recruitment and hiring policies could either enhance or undermine the success of promising endeavors, especially as it relates to diversity, in particular locales or schools. There is no question that the selection criteria have a significant impact upon any efforts to address equity issues and the recruitment of culturally different teachers. Boyer and Baptiste (1996) have written extensively about the ways recruiters think, as well as the way they pursue their craft. Further, they say that there is a need for a transformation in the way teacher educators think, as well as the way they create academic policy, design teacher education curricula, and evaluate prospective teachers' efforts and profiles with specific references made to selection criteria as it pertains to males in the elementary classroom.

Since much of the research on teacher selection is predicated on the research of the corporate world, the recent writings on emotional intelligence by David Galemon are of some interest. The phrase "emotional intelligence" was coined by psychologists Peter Salovey, Yale University, and John Mayer, University of New Hampshire, to describe qualities like understanding one's own feelings, empathy for the feelings of others, and the regulation of emotion in a way that enhances living (What's Your E. Q.?, 1995). It is by definition a complex, multifaceted quality representing such intangibles as self awareness, empathy, persistence and social deftness. Perhaps the most visible emotional skills, the ones we recognize most readily, also include graciousness and the ability to read a social situation. Researchers believe that about 90% of emotional communication is non verbal. The Center for Creative Leadership studied unsuccessful leadership, and concluded that failure occurred most often because of interpersonal activities rather than technical shortcomings. In the corporate world, according to personnel executives, IQ may get you hired, but EQ results in retention and promotion. Perhaps quality remains an organizational dimension, and will continue to be an elusive element to define.

As one seeks to further clarify the concept of quality the efforts of Gideonese et. al. are quite insightful. They say "Our common vision of quality for America's teacher education institutions embraces interacting themes, but it rests upon a single, overriding premise; America's schools are as strong and effective as their teachers make them. Educational effectiveness and reform, therefore, depend on the quality, preparation, and commitment of the professionals staffing our schools." (p. 5) Further, they state that the teacher education units must be places of active conscience with a special responsiveness to all learners and reflect an intellectual vitality that is manifested by subjecting themselves to constant challenge. These authors comment on intellectual vitality this way, "...this vitality is found in the actions of faculty, administrators, cooperating teachers, student teacher supervisors, and the teacher candidates themselves...intellectual vitality is characterized by a willingness to find and investigate dilemmas and explore

options." (p. 8) They also indicate that quality involves a respect for conflict, risk taking, and the fostering of ambiguity.

Several writers have sought to address the basic values of education. Kohl and Witty (1996) identify the four basic values that drive education as being quality, efficiency, equity, and choice. They propose, "The premise proposed here is that they are not only subsumed in school policy but also actually drive the political culture responsible for the decision making of school policy at the federal, state, and local levels." (p.837) They further define quality this way: "Quality is an end goal for all educational endeavors and focuses on substantial improvement for those affected by policy. The value of quality is actualized in policies such as state teacher certification requirements, district use of instructional resources, and local and state testing programs." (p.837)

Getting general agreement upon what constitutes quality may be an impossibility. A similar situation exists in efforts to identify objective measures that will predict quality. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993), when writing about quality management, state that there are many views of the nature of quality. They further explicate their views this way; "Some see quality as implicit and indefinable-- 'you know it when you see it'. Others take what might be termed a 'measurement view' of quality--it is satisfactory conformance to some predefined standard. Still others claim that quality is simply a matter of reputation. How can we make sense of these different--and often opposing points of view of the nature of quality?" (p.45) These writers feel there are three basic definitions of quality: quality assurance, contract performance, and customer driven. Emphasized by this author in a prior research report (Moore, 1987): "Raths (personal communication to Robert Fisher and Elizabeth Ashburn, July, 1984) stated, 'the goal to define quality, to write down the attributes of quality to seek measures that predict quality, is an inspiration doomed to failure. Quality is an attribute that is not defined in literature, in music, in medicine, in the law or anywhere else--except in the trades'." (p.43) Also, he reported that the AACTE Task Force on Quality Issues in Education concluded that it was unable to delineate quality indicators of programs or teachers.

In its 1995 publication, *Standards and Policies for the Accreditation of Professional Education Units*, NCATE makes reference to what is described as an evolving system of quality assurance for the teaching profession. The document refers to the development of the 1995 standards as "...guided by a vision of quality. Three themes signaling quality in a school of education are intellectual vitality, professional community, and professional conscience." (p. 11) NCATE continues by stating that their standards focus on the overall quality of the professional unit. The authors state, "The unit's policies, procedures, governance, administration, staffing, and resources should ensure that programs are of high quality."(p.12) The authors further explain:

> Although the words *the unit ensures* and *quality* do not appear in each standard and indicator, each one should be read as if they did. In addition, words such as *effective*, *superior*, and *efficient* are not written in all standards, but are implied. NCATE expects units to ensure that their programs, admissions, candidates, and faculty are of the high quality expected by the profession. (p.12)

The quandary of defining faculty quality persists.

Research Procedures and Results

It was the primary goal of this study to ascertain the nature of quality indicators which are currently being utilized by Kansas K-12 public school administrators in the initial selection process of classroom teachers. These data and other cogent information will be of value in improving K-12 schools in general, with special applicability to the state of Kansas. Kansas school administrators and related policy making officials, teacher educators, and accrediting agencies need to be apprised of what employers believe are indicators of quality when initial employment decisions are being made. Kansas is a state rich with geographic, economic, and cultural diversity. Education within the state is certainly reflective of this diversity. These factors manifest themselves in school district size, student behaviors and attitudes, and parental expectations, all of which result in a great variance in the demands placed on the administration of a local district. This scenario exists not only in Kansas, but in nearly every state in the nation. Differing demands are likely to cause administrators from the various districts to value different characteristics in the teachers selected, placing emphasis on those quality indicators which fulfill their needs. It is these dissimilarities that the study sought to identify.

Because of the aforementioned diversity, and the variance in the size of the 304 public school districts within the state, all were included in the study. The survey instrument was mailed to all building administrators and district superintendents within each of these districts. Assistant principals and assistant superintendents were not included. This procedure resulted in an initial mailing of 1,743 surveys; one to each public elementary, middle, and high school attendance site in the state, and one to each superintendent. It should be noted, however, that many school districts have administrators which are responsible for more than one building or position. In Kansas there were 189 such repeat positions, leaving a total of 1,554 administrators which were surveyed.

As a result of this initial mailing of the survey instrument, 469 responses were received from 122 superintendents, 131 elementary principals, 47 middle or junior high principals, 99 high school principals, 42 principals of schools with a combination of grades, and 28 responses which were unidentifiable or unusable because of missing data. This resulted in a return rate of 30.2%. Approximately one month following the initial mailing, a second mailing of the survey instrument was sent to all non-respondents. An additional 399 responses were received for a total of 868 returned surveys, resulting in a return rate of 55.9%. A complete listing of respondents can be found in Table 1.

Table 1:
Summary of Respondents

Position	Initial Mailing	Second Mailing	Total
Superintendent	122	76	198
High School Principal	99	56	155
Junior High/Middle School Principal	47	48	95
Elementary Principals	131	173	304
Mixed/Combined Grades	42	21	63
Unidentifiable or Unusable Surveys	28	25	53
Totals	469	399	868

Approximately one month following the second mailing, a telephone survey of 60 randomly selected non-respondents was undertaken to determine possible reasons why some survey instruments were not returned. Forty-five of these non-respondents were reached by telephone, for a contact rate of 75%. Of the administrators contacted, 33.3% indicated that they were not aware of having received the survey, 28.9% stated that they were too busy to complete the instrument, 15.6% had misplaced the survey prior to returning it, 11.1% said that they had already returned the survey, and 6.7% considered the study unimportant. The remaining 4.4% were administrators who held multiple positions within their districts and had previously returned the survey in another capacity. Eighteen of the 45 administrators contacted indicated that they would complete a replacement instrument, which was then mailed to those individuals. It was concluded that there were numerous reasons for non-response, relating primarily to the activities of the administrator during a busy time of the school year. The results of the telephone survey indicated no biases toward the project, its source of origin, or the survey instrument itself.

As previously mentioned, the survey instrument utilized in this study is comprised of six sections, each representing divergent aspects of the teacher selection process. Part I consisted of demographic information regarding the size, type, and location of the participant's school. In Part II the respondents were asked to assign a number, ranging from one to five, representing the frequency of use for each of the 57 quality indicators

during the teacher selection process. A rating of five was assigned to those indicators that the respondents always used in the hiring process and a rating of one was assigned to indicators never used in the hiring process. The participants were again prompted to assign a number, ranging from one to five, to rate the importance they attached to each of the 57 quality indicators. Five was assigned to those indicators that were judged to be essential in the selection process, and one was assigned to the indicators judged to be of little or no importance when making final employment decisions in the hiring of K-12 teachers. The 57 indicators of quality are divided into eight subsections which describe the following elements: academic preparation, experience, personal qualities/data, documentation of teaching effectiveness/potential, evidence of scholarship, service activities, personal/professional data, and leadership potential.

Part III of the survey instrument asked the participants to select the 10 most important items from the list of 57 quality indicators, and rank order them from most to least important. In Part IV participants could list any additional quality indicators they felt may have been omitted from the previous list of 57. In Part V, a list of 15 sources of data/procedures was provided, and participants were asked to select the five sources to which they assigned the most importance, and rank them in order of most to least important.

Part VI of the instrument was comprised of two open ended questions, and a categorical item about the current status of first year teacher preparation as compared to five years ago. There were five categories for this item ranging from 'Much better prepared' to 'Not nearly as well prepared'. Respondents were also asked to explain or describe quality differences between current first year teachers, and those prepared prior to 1990, in terms of abilities and teaching effectiveness. They were also asked, "What are the major shortcomings of today's first year teachers?" The body of information thus obtained from these two questions was separated into nine categories and classified as either positive or negative. Additionally, two neutral categories were added to the previous eighteen, for a total of 20 possible classifications for each response to the open ended questions. The positive and negative response groupings related to discipline/classroom management issues, multicultural issues, experience/theoretical vs. practical issues, attitudinal and work ethic issues, technological issues, knowledge about Quality Performance Accreditation, additional teaching areas, instructional/ methodological/motivational issues, and a category for all written responses that did not meet the criteria of the former categories. The two neutral categories were added for responses indicating that the participant felt that there were no differences between the preparation levels of current first year teachers and those prepared prior to 1990, and for those who felt that first year teachers had no more shortcomings than experienced teachers.

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The information obtained in the open ended questions was carefully reviewed to determine if the respondents would proffer any unique indicators of quality for beginning teachers. No new quality indicators were proposed.

Results

Part I: Demographic Items

The majority of the data from this section of the instrument are described elsewhere in the report. However, for comparative purposes it was necessary to further subdivide the participants into various district sizes. Since Kansas has very few large or medium sized districts by federal standards, it was decided that size classifications used by the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) would be utilized. In the case of districts with more than one high school or high schools of differing size classifications, the size category of the largest high school was assigned to that district. Although these classifications usually apply to the size of the upper three grades of a secondary building, they are generally a good indication of district size. They thus provide for a more even distribution of the data across size categories than do the skewed distributions obtained using the federal district sizes.

Table 2:
KSHSAA Size Classifications of Respondents' Districts

	Number of Districts	Percent of Total
1-A	126	17.4%
2-A	109	15.0%
3-A	146	20.1%
4-A	160	22.1%
5-A	82	11.3%
6-A	102	14.1%

Valid Responses: 725

The KSHSAA categories are not absolute indicators of district size, therefore caution must be exercised when interpreting the results. In most cases the differences obtained in these breakdowns are not inferential in nature, but are merely descriptive differences in the subpopulations of this study. Any attempt to attach substantial meaning to these differences without the appropriate statistical analysis would be misleading. The results of this study are reported as either response frequencies and percentages, or as means,

or average scores, with an accompanying standard deviation. As with any comparisons between groups, the scores of individual group members can vary greatly. Results should be so interpreted .

Part II: Quality Indicator Ratings

As previously mentioned, the respondents were asked to assign a number ranging from one to five, to each of the 57 quality indicators. The numbers represented the frequency of use of the indicator, with five representing an indicator that is always used, and one representing an indicator that is never used when hiring K-12 teachers. The participants were again prompted to assign a number, ranging from one to five, to rate the importance they attached to each of the 57 quality indicators. Five was assigned to those indicators that were judged to be essential in the selection process, and one was assigned to the indicators judged to be of little or no importance to the hiring of K-12 teachers.
The 57 quality indicators were grouped into eight categories. Table 3 shows the results of these ratings.

Table 3:
Quality Indicator Means and Standard Deviations as reported by Subcategory

Rank and Subcategory	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Personal Qualities/Data	3.94	0.40	3.88	0.42
2. Experience	3.39	0.60	3.03	0.61
3. Academic Preparation	3.23	0.59	3.02	0.59
4. Personal/Professional Development	3.14	0.72	2.97	0.70
5. Leadership Potential	3.09	0.79	2.91	0.74
6. Service Activities	2.98	0.79	2.81	0.79
7. Documentation of Teaching Effectiveness	2.77	0.69	2.77	0.65
8. Evidence of Scholarship	2.73	0.70	2.58	0.69

Valid Responses (listwise): 787

The subcategory *personal qualities and data* was clearly the most frequently used and assigned the greatest importance of the eight subcategories, thus indicating that items from this subcategory are the most likely to be utilized in determining teacher quality. Tables 4-19 illustrate the results of the frequency of use and the importance ratings of each of the eight subcategories shown in Table 3. The results are broken down by school district size and by administrative position. For frequency of use, respondents assigned a five to an indicator that was always used in the hiring process and a one to an indicator that was never used. For importance, participants assigned a five to an indicator that was judged to be extremely important and a one to an indicator that was judged to be of little or no importance to the hiring process.

Table 4:
Personal Qualities/Data as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	3.82	0.40	3.75	0.43
2-A	3.88	0.38	3.81	0.47
3-A	3.91	0.37	3.85	0.35
4-A	3.94	0.37	3.87	0.38
5-A	4.04	0.43	3.96	0.41
6-A	4.04	0.39	3.97	0.41

Valid Responses - Use: 721, Importance: 708

Table 5:
Personal Qualities/Data as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	3.90	0.39	3.83	0.40
High School Principals	3.89	0.42	3.82	0.40
Junior High/Middle School Principals	3.99	0.39	3.90	0.40
Elementary Principals	3.99	0.40	3.96	0.43
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	3.92	0.39	3.84	0.44

Valid Responses - Use: 811, Importance: 796

Interestingly, when this subcategory is analyzed using KSHSAA size classification, as district size increased, the reported frequency of use increased as well. The same condition exists in the importance ratings, indicating that larger districts are more likely to use items from this category, and attach greater importance to them. Also, elementary and middle school principals report a greater frequency of use, and importance rating than do other administrators. However, all of the positions are closely grouped around the overall means for their respective ratings.

Table 6:
Experience as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	3.36	0.54	2.95	0.58
2-A	3.48	0.64	3.09	0.61
3-A	3.41	0.64	3.12	0.65
4-A	3.39	0.54	3.04	0.60
5-A	3.37	0.56	3.03	0.60
6-A	3.34	0.64	2.95	0.60

Valid Responses - Use: 720, Importance: 707

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Table 7:
Experience as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	3.36	0.61	3.06	0.59
High School Principals	3.44	0.62	3.07	0.60
Junior High/Middle School Principals	3.43	0.57	3.07	0.63
Elementary Principals	3.33	0.60	2.96	0.62
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	3.54	0.54	3.12	0.61

Valid Responses - Use: 810, Importance: 794

Experience is an issue among small to medium sized school districts. However, not among the smallest, with 2-A and 3-A districts reporting the greatest frequency of use, and 3-A districts attaching the most importance to this subcategory. Principals of schools with mixed and combined grades report using items from this subcategory more frequently than do other administrators.

Table 8:
Academic Preparation as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	3.09	0.57	2.86	0.57
2-A	3.23	0.57	2.98	0.57
3-A	3.21	0.57	3.00	0.53
4-A	3.27	0.59	3.06	0.59
5-A	3.23	0.66	3.02	0.68
6-A	3.29	0.62	3.06	.060

Valid Responses - Use: 721, Importance: 709

Table 9:
Academic Preparation as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	3.19	0.60	2.98	0.64
High School Principals	3.20	0.56	2.95	0.76
Junior High/Middle School Principals	3.18	0.59	2.95	0.56
Elementary Principals	3.29	0.62	3.11	0.54
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	3.21	0.53	2.96	0.62

Valid Responses - Use: 811, Importance: 781

Administrators from 1-A districts report using items from this subcategory less frequently, and assign less importance to them than do participants from the other KSHSAA classifications. Position-wise, elementary principals use items from this subcategory more often than do other administrators.

Table 10:
Personal/Professional Development as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	3.12	0.75	2.95	0.70
2-A	3.16	0.73	2.96	0.74
3-A	3.12	0.72	3.00	0.69
4-A	3.12	0.66	2.98	0.68
5-A	3.17	0.71	2.92	0.65
6-A	3.16	0.73	2.96	0.71

Valid Responses - Use: 719, Importance: 705

Table 11:
Personal/Professional Development as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	3.16	0.68	3.02	0.59
High School Principals	3.12	0.71	2.97	0.60
Junior High/Middle School Principals	3.07	0.72	2.93	0.63
Elementary Principals	3.13	0.75	2.95	0.62
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	3.25	0.73	3.04	0.61

Valid Responses - Use: 790, Importance: 792

Administrators from all district sizes were similar in their use and importance ratings of this subcategory. Principals of mixed and combined grades schools report the greatest frequency of use, but they are quite similar to other administrators in rating the importance of this subcategory.

Table 12:
Leadership Potential as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	2.95	0.85	2.77	0.79
2-A	3.00	0.83	2.84	0.77
3-A	3.09	0.77	2.97	0.70
4-A	3.11	0.72	2.96	0.72
5-A	3.32	0.80	2.98	0.81
6-A	3.13	0.77	2.94	0.70

Valid Responses - Use: 718, Importance: 705

Table 13:
Leadership Potential as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	3.08	0.79	2.92	0.73
High School Principals	3.10	0.77	2.94	0.72
Junior High/Middle School Principals	2.97	0.70	2.78	0.71
Elementary Principals	3.13	0.83	2.93	0.78
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	3.14	0.76	2.92	0.70

Valid Responses - Use: 789, Importance: 792

Administrators from 5-A school districts clearly report using items from this subcategory more frequently than do the other district sizes and, in fact, gave it higher frequency of use ratings than the previous subcategory, *personal/professional development*. Similar results were obtained in the importance ratings for 5-A districts.

Table 14:
Service Activities as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	2.88	0.77	2.77	0.75
2-A	2.98	0.76	2.74	0.71
3-A	2.99	0.80	2.82	0.81
4-A	2.97	0.73	2.81	0.78
5-A	3.15	0.88	2.84	0.90
6-A	2.99	0.79	2.82	0.78

Valid Responses - Use: 719, Importance: 704

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Table 15:
Service Activities as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	3.02	0.78	2.86	0.78
High School Principals	2.94	0.79	2.82	0.77
Junior High/Middle School Principals	2.82	0.72	2.57	0.72
Elementary Principals	3.01	0.82	2.84	0.85
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	2.99	0.72	2.80	0.69

Valid Responses - Use 809, Importance: 792

Administrators from 5-A districts gave the highest credence to these items in frequency of use ratings, but assigned similar importance ratings. The smallest school districts clearly report the lowest frequency of use and importance ratings. All positions reported comparable frequency of use ratings. However, middle school principals appear to attach less importance to these items.

Table 16:
Teaching Effectiveness/Potential as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	2.66	0.62	2.64	0.56
2-A	2.83	0.82	2.82	0.77
3-A	2.69	0.63	2.71	0.61
4-A	2.76	0.65	2.80	0.62
5-A	2.89	0.69	2.83	0.70
6-A	2.86	0.74	2.83	0.71

Valid Responses - Use: 720, Importance: 706

Table 17:
Teaching Effectiveness/Potential as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	2.69	0.72	2.75	0.67
High School Principals	2.72	0.65	2.74	0.62
Junior High/Middle School Principals	2.81	0.65	2.76	0.62
Elementary Principals	2.84	0.70	2.82	0.67
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	2.82	0.67	2.75	0.64

Valid Responses - Use 810, Importance: 794

The largest districts report the most frequent use of the subcategory, *teaching effectiveness*, although they are similar to most other district sizes in importance ratings. 1-A districts attached the lowest importance ratings to this subcategory.

Table 18:
Evidence of Scholarship as reported by School District Size

School District Size (KSHSAA)	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-A	2.59	0.69	2.43	0.67
2-A	2.71	0.76	2.57	0.71
3-A	2.73	0.67	2.60	0.68
4-A	2.76	0.66	2.66	0.63
5-A	2.91	0.77	2.68	0.78
6-A	2.74	0.68	2.54	0.69

Valid Responses - Use: 721, Importance: 706

Table 19:
Evidence of Scholarship as reported by Administrative Position

Administrative Position	Frequency of Use		Importance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
District Superintendent	2.77	0.68	2.67	0.66
High School Principals	2.62	0.72	2.48	0.69
Junior High/Middle School Principals	2.59	0.65	2.47	0.68
Elementary Principals	2.80	0.73	2.63	0.73
Mixed/Combined Grade Principals	2.70	0.65	2.55	0.61

Valid Responses - Use 793, Importance: 794

The 5-A districts rated frequency of use items from this subcategory higher than the previous category, *teaching effectiveness*. However, importance ratings remained consistent with other district sizes. The 1-A districts rated both use and importance of this subcategory substantially below the mean, as did junior high and middle school principals. District superintendents were similar to the other positions in their frequency of use ratings, but were somewhat higher in the importance attached to these items.

Part III: Quality Indicator Rankings

This section of the instrument asked the respondent to review and prioritize the various listed 57 quality indicators which are in fact truly valued as employment decisions are being made. The information thus obtained is in reality the outcome of a forced choice process. Instructions as stated on the instrument (Appendix): From among all of the 57 quality indicators included in the previous eight categories, please rank in order the ten most important items.

Table 20:
Overall Quality Indicator Rankings*

Rank	Q.I.	Description	Selection Frequency	% Selecting Item
1.	21	Unquestionable Integrity and Moral Values	246	31.0%
2.	25	Level of Concern and Caring for Children/Youth	105	13.2%
3.	23	Flexibility in Working With Students and Colleagues	104	13.1%
4.	23	" "	97	12.3%
5.	27	High Energy and/or Motivation Level	83	10.5%
6.	27	" "	75	9.5%
7.	27	" "	61	7.8%
8.	27	" "	62	8.0%
9.	30	Oral Communication Skills	52	6.8%
10.	14	Computer/Instructional Tech. Course work	45	6.0%

*Respondents ranked each item separately. Reported frequencies and percentages are, therefore, independent of each other and should not be totaled.

Valid Responses: 793

Overwhelmingly, the most frequently chosen quality indicator by school administrators was *unquestionable integrity and moral values*. This was followed by *level of concern and caring for children/youth*. It is interesting to note that *flexibility in working with students/colleagues* and *high energy and/or motivation level* occupy more than one ranking. This is possibly because of the independent nature of each ranked position and the importance attributed and assigned to these quality indicators by school administrators. Oral communication skills was ranked ninth in importance. The quality indicator *formal course work in computer/instructional technology*, was the tenth ranked item. Quality indicators from the subcategory *personal qualities/data* account for nine of the top ten ranks.

Part V: Data Sources and Procedures

In Part V, the respondents were asked to identify and rank the five most important sources of data used in the teacher selection process. Table 21 presents the overall rankings of the administrators as a whole.

Table 21:
Overall Importance Ranks of Data Sources/Procedures*

Rank	Data Source/Procedure	Frequency Chosen	% Choosing Item
1.	Personal Interviews	319	40.8%
2.	Oral Recommendations from Current or Former Employers	210	26.9%
3.	Confidential Credential Files	158	20.2%
4.	Contents of an Application Folder	133	17.0%
5.	Written Recommendations	58	7.4%

*Respondents ranked each item separately. Reported frequencies and percentages are, therefore, independent of each other and should not be totaled.

Valid Responses: 782

Not surprisingly, personal interviews were the preferred source of information among school administrators with oral recommendations being next. Confidential credential files ranked third, followed by the contents of an application folder, and then written recommendations. The data obtained in this section of the instrument remained remarkably stable across subpopulations, with no changes in rankings among administrative positions and/or school district sizes.

Part VI

Part VI of the instrument was somewhat different from the other sections since it sought comparative information on quality differences between today's first year teachers and those prepared prior to 1990. In the first section the respondents compared today's first year teachers to those prepared five years ago. The second section consisted of two open-ended questions relating to this comparison.

Part VI: Categorical Item

Table 22:
Item as stated on the instrument (Appendix A): What would you say about the preparation level of today's first year teachers as compared to those prepared five years ago?

Preparation of First Year Teachers

Response Category	Response Frequency	Response Percentage
1. Much Better Prepared	174	22.6%
2. Somewhat Better Prepared	382	49.7%
3. About the Same in Preparation	173	22.5%
4. Not Quite as Well Prepared	35	4.6%
5. Not Nearly as Well Prepared	5	0.6%

Valid Responses: 769

As is indicated in Table 22, the administrators believe that today's teachers are better prepared than those prepared prior to 1990, with 72.3% indicating that they were either much better prepared or somewhat better prepared.

Part VI: Qualitative Item 1

Part VI was designed to elicit a qualitative comparison of todays beginning teachers with those prepared prior to 1990. In essence it was an effort to ascertain whether discernible program reforms were in evidence and having an impact. Item as stated on the instrument (Appendix A): How would you explain or describe quality differences between today's first year teachers and those prepared prior to 1990 in terms of their abilities to teach effectively?

Table 23:
Quality Differences of Today's First Year Teachers

Response Category	Response Frequency	Response Percentage
Increased Instructional, Methodological, and Motivational Skills	187	36.7%
More Preparation in Computers and Instructional Technology	50	9.8%
Greater Amount of Practical Experience	45	8.8%
Neutral Response/No Differences	41	8.0%
Decreased Dedication and Work Ethic	35	6.9%
Other	152	29.8%

Valid Responses: 510

Overwhelmingly, the preferred overall comment category associated with the first qualitative question in Part VI related to *Increased Instructional, Methodological, and Motivational Skills*, indicating that school administrators feel that today's first year teachers are better equipped to deal with these issues than were their pre-1990 counterparts. A distant second were responses relating to positive comments about the *technological capabilities* of today's first year teachers. This means that school administrators generally feel that current first year teachers are better prepared in the areas of computers and instructional technology than were first year teachers prior to 1990. The third most frequent comment category related to the perception of an increased *amount of practical experience* of today's first year teachers. The fourth category was a neutral response, indicating that many school administrators feel that there are essentially no differences in the quality of today's first year teachers and those of five years ago. The fifth set of responses related to a *decrease in dedication and work ethic*. There is a contingent of administrators that feels current first year teachers are less willing to expend extra time and energy to the task of educating youth than were first year teachers prepared prior to 1990. Since some of the respondents' comments were either unique and/or directly related to a specific school situation, it was decided to use "other" as a response category which in essence is a compendium of discrete comments.

Several of the respondents provided comments that depict the nature of these response categories. The following are representative of the positive nature with which today's graduates are viewed, as seen in the highest response grouping, *Increased Instructional,*

Methodological, and Motivational Skills, from the first qualitative item in Part VI:

- "Today's first year teachers seem to have a better understanding of the learning process and human development. They seem to understand the importance of flexibility and movement in the classroom."

- "Today's graduates are on the cutting edge with respect to current research and innovative, effective teaching methodologies. This breadth allows them to come to an organization ready to teach and be a part of the faculty."

- "It is my impression that today's graduates have a much better grasp of effective instruction techniques, alternative teaching strategies, and have more opportunities to work with children prior to graduation."

Closely related to these comments are the opinions of administrators who thought that technological skills and preparation in instructional technology were strengths of today's graduates. Two administrators exemplify this response category by saying:

- "Today's first year teachers are better prepared in the use of technology assisted teaching. They have a greater understanding of how to teach using different media and I believe they are given more training in different models of instruction"

- "Today's teachers are more knowledgeable in the use of technology hardware and software. I believe that this translates to better instruction."

A notable portion of the administrators who responded to the qualitative items related that current first year teachers are more experienced when they are initially employed. The following comments portray this conviction:

- "The first year teachers involved in five year education programs seem to have more classroom experience and extensive exposure to a mentor. Most immediately continue towards their M.A. or M.S. degree, which is essential in today's atmosphere of innovative methodology."

- " I think today's first year teachers have a more realistic view of the enormity of the task ahead of them. They have had more field-based experiences from which to draw upon."

In both of the qualitative items, many of the negative comments of administrators about first year teachers related to negative attitudes, a decreased sense of dedication, and a general lack of a work ethic. The frustration that administrators experience in this area

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is expressed in the following responses:

- " It seems as though new teachers are better prepared for the curriculum and technology, but lack the work ethic and initiative/resourcefulness needed to be an effective teacher. It seems that they don't know how to work hard to achieve something."

- "They do not spend the time preparing like teachers did in the past. I very seldom see them taking home the work as previous teachers did. They just see their positions as a job and not a profession."

- " They need to understand the importance of being a part of a team. Teaching is no longer a closed-door, independent undertaking."

Part VI: Qualitative Item 2

This subsection elicited perceived program weaknesses, but did not ask for any comparisons to earlier graduates. Item as stated on the instrument (Appendix A): What are the major shortcomings of today's first year teachers?

Table 24:
Shortcomings of Today's First Year Teachers

Response Category	Response Frequency	Response Percentage
Insufficient Discipline and Classroom Management Skills	141	24.4%
Inadequate Classroom Experience	112	19.3%
Decreased Dedication and Work Ethic	97	16.8%
Decreased Instructional, Methodological, and Motivational Skills	56	9.7%
Knowledge about Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA)	34	5.9%
All Other Responses	139	23.9%

Valid Responses: 579

Responses were more evenly distributed across categories on the second qualitative item in Part VI. The most popular response category related to *insufficient discipline and*

classroom management, indicating that school administrators feel that many current first year teachers are ill-prepared to cope with problems associated with classroom management. The second most frequent response category related to the belief that today's first year teachers still lack adequate *classroom experience* prior to entering the profession. *Decreased dedication and work ethic* was the third most frequently cited shortcoming. As in the first qualitative item, this suggests that many first year teachers lack drive and initiative, and are frequently not willing to devote the extra time necessary for class preparation or other activities. The fourth category related to a perceived inadequacy of *instructional, methodological, and motivational skills*. This listed shortcoming also appears in the first item as a positive trait among current first year teachers. Although its appearance in this item is in direct conflict with the first item, the frequency of the response category is somewhat less in the second qualitative question. The fifth most frequent response category for this item was a category relating to a deficit in first year teachers' *knowledge about Quality Performance Accreditation Issues*. Some respondents (5.9%) expressed concern that first year teachers may be lacking in knowledge about school reform, outcomes-based education, and the effective schools movement.

The most frequently mentioned shortcoming of first year teachers related to insufficient discipline and classroom management skills. Several illustrative comments were received, examples of which are:

- "The biggest [shortcoming] would be classroom management. It takes a lot of skill and finesse to be able to organize a classroom and have it run for maximum learning. This is a skill that can be honed, but first year teachers should definitely have an instinct for this when they come to their first teaching position."

- "Most are unprepared for the daily dynamics of unexpected events in their classrooms. For example, disruptive students, students demonstrating passive resistance towards learning, or uncooperative and hostile students (and parents)."

- "They are unprepared many times in effective classroom management skills. Some lack good organizational and communication skills."

Summary, Implications, and Recommendations

Summary

The primary goals of the study were to ascertain the nature of quality indicators that are currently being utilized by Kansas K-12 administrators in the initial selection process of classroom teachers and how these indicators would have merit in the improvement of schools. It is believed that the data thus obtained will be extremely useful to personnel affiliated with school systems, teacher educators in general, state and national accrediting agencies and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) in its efforts to identify indicators of quality for experienced teachers.

A major component of this research project was the conceptualization and development of an original survey instrument which was valid, reliable, effective, and efficacious in nature. Considerable time and effort was devoted to that task to insure the presence of the foregoing attributes, as well as making the instrument sufficiently comprehensive and user friendly. The response rate, the telephone survey results, and other data obtained, including evaluative comments by the respondents, were considered.

Additionally, the design of the survey instrument was such that it was possible to ascertain non-listed quality indicators which administrators valued. In Part II, the respondent could add new indicators in the following categories: academic preparation, personal qualities/data, evidence of scholarship, service activities, and leadership potential. Part IV solicited any quality indicators which may have been omitted or any other concerns or suggestions. Similarly, in Part V information was sought on data sources and procedures. Respondents had a special opportunity to manifest valued indicators of quality in the comments section of Part VI when they described comparative quality differences between recent graduates as contrasted to those prepared prior to 1990. Ostensibly, the survey instrument was rather comprehensive since no unique indicators were delineated or suggested by respondents in any of the sections of the instrument. Consequently, it is possible to conclude that the objective of developing an effective research instrument has been achieved. An item analysis has been completed to facilitate future revisions. It appears that the number of listed indicators can be reduced because some of the listed indicators seemed of little importance to the respondents.

An analyses of the 868 completed survey instruments, plus the extensive literature review, leads the author to proffer several observations, possible implications, and some recommended actions for different constituencies. The response rate of 55.9% is unusually high considering the contextual conditions that were in existence at the time

of the survey. This manifested interest in the quality indicators associated with the initial selection of teachers is explicit evidence on the part of administrators of not only a dedication to the continuing improvement of schools, but also to the importance of well qualified teachers in the improvement endeavors. Demographic descriptive data on the school systems and respondents were obtained in Part I. Part II contained the listed 57 quality indicators which were grouped into the following eight categories: academic preparation, experience, personal qualities, documentation of teaching effectiveness, evidence of scholarship, service activities, personal/professional development, and leadership potential qualities. The respondents rated, on a five point scale, each of the indicators as to importance and frequency of use in the selection process of K-12 Teachers. Specific data pertaining to these ratings are reported in the preceding section on research procedures and results. A summary, by administrative position, of the usable responses is as follows: elementary principal-304, superintendent-198, high school principal-155, junior high/middle school principal-95, and combined grades-63. These indicator ratings, when grouped by sub category and reported as means, resulted in the following rank order of the sub categories: personal qualities/data, experience, academic preparation, personal/professional development, leadership potential, service activities, documentation of teaching effectiveness and evidence of scholarship. Additional specific data pertaining to these ratings are reported in the section on research procedures and results.

Some very interesting results emanated from Part III, where the respondents listed in rank order the ten most important quality indicators. Although there are some discrete differences depending upon the position of the respondent and the size of the district where the respondent was employed, in general, the most important indicators of quality are: *unquestionable integrity and moral values, level of concern and caring for children/youth, flexibility in working with students and colleagues, high energy/and or motivation level, oral communication skills, formal course work in computer usage and instructional technology, creativity in implementing instruction, willingness to consider divergent ideas/concepts, emotional stability, and supervisor statements/ratings*. The data obtained from the respondents is inexorable relative to the importance and use placed upon quality indicators listed in the personal qualities/data category.

Data sources and selection procedures are critical in the selection process. In Part V, the respondents identified the five most important elements to be: personal interviews, oral recommendations obtained by the respondent, confidential credential files, the contents of an application folder, and solicited written recommendations.

In Part VI administrators were asked to contrast the preparation level of today's first year teachers to those prepared before 1990, and to describe quality differences as well as

current major shortcomings. The administrators believe that today's teachers are better prepared than those prepared five years earlier, with 72.3% indicating that they were either much better prepared or somewhat better prepared. The overwhelming strength of recent graduates was related to positive instructional, methodological and motivational qualities, with backgrounds in technology and their amount of practical experiences mentioned frequently. With respect to shortcomings, deficiencies in classroom management and discipline, lack of adequate actual classroom experiences, and a concern about attitudinal and work ethic issues were administrators' most frequently cited concerns.

Implications

Evidently, school administrators responding to this survey are quite aware of the parental concerns as expressed in the May, 1996 *USA Today Poll* (Parents, Students Grade, 1996). The participants who were polled expressed a need to have teachers who are caring, and that the public schools could do a better job training children in ethical and moral values which are consistent with their own family values. Administrators who responded to the present survey have clearly indicated that these two factors are extremely important when they initially select teachers by giving high ratings to these two quality indicators.

Some policy makers and public school critics may be somewhat dismayed that school administrators did not place very much significance on the quality indicators listed in the academic preparation category of the instrument. However, this may be due to the fact that 73% of the parents in the recent *USA Today poll* (Parents, Students Grade, 1996) have stated that the academic standards in schools are about right. Also, as Darling-Hammond and Sclan (Sikula, Buttery, & Guyton, Eds., 1996) reported, the GPAs of newly qualified teachers were noticeably higher than those of other bachelor's recipients, with 50% of newly qualified teachers earning an average of 3.25 or better as compared to 40% of all graduates. (p 73) The administrators evidently are much more concerned about the personal qualities attributes.

Undoubtedly, the lack of concurrence among K-12 administrators, government officials, policy makers, and teacher educators relative to the indicators of quality for beginning K-12 teachers is of some concern. However, this discordance should not obviate possible solutions or recommendations, pertaining to optimistic strategies for the improvement of the schools. Certainly, each of the interested consistent groups needs to become more knowledgeable about the evident disparities and some possible reasons for said existence, whether it be philosophical, difference in perceptions, lack of data and/or plausibility. The strong advocates for standards will need to expand the concept to include many additional qualitative and personal characteristics that are so highly valued by many administrators, students, and parents.

An important dimension for K-12 administration will be the development of a valid, objective data source for making selection decisions pertaining to several of the quality indicators in the personal qualifications category. Although letters of recommendations provide useful information on some personal qualities, typically they are not a valuable data base for the areas of moral values, emotional stability, creativity, flexibility, willingness to consider divergent ideas/concepts, and the level of concern for learners. It is evident that some administrators are now using videos of classroom teaching and teaching portfolios, and are finding them quite valuable. Such data sources need to become more sophisticated and used more extensively.

It is increasingly apparent that teaching portfolios and videos of classroom teaching are becoming more important data sources. Unquestionably, the value of these two data sources can be enhanced by changing their formats, length, and quality to efficaciously present information pertaining to a candidate's personal qualities. This can best be accomplished by collaborative planning sessions involving representatives from schools and institutions of higher education.

Personal interviews continue to be an extremely important procedure and data source even though they are notably unreliable in predicting the candidate's future success in the classroom. Undoubtedly, the personal interview will remain a dominant source of information in the selection process. Thus, it is imperative that objectivity and reliability of these interviews be enhanced by having administrators formulate and incorporate predetermined content and structure. The focus should be on eliciting information, and discerning behavioral data which are unavailable from other sources. This would be an alternative to what some school systems practice, especially larger districts. They utilize, primarily as a screening device, commercial interview systems with prescribed questions and a method for recording responses leading to an interviewee profile and score. The publishers of such systems maintain that telephone interviews are palpable with the purposes of a personal interview, but require that the interviewers participate in multi-day training sessions prior to being authorized to use the system.

One of the significant issues that is prevalent in the research literature on improving schools relates to multicultural education and the associated diversity issues. Changing demographic conditions are prominent, especially as it relates to the mobility of families and the younger generation. The population shift from rural to urban America has serious implications for the strategies to improve schools, especially as it relates to the composition of the teaching force. Most K-12 students will not spend their adult lives in a societal milieu similar to their school setting. Multiple approaches and efforts are needed to increase the diversity of the teaching force. Higher education institutions, in conjunction with states and local districts, need to develop strategies to attract and keep

diverse candidates/teachers. For example, additional male teachers are desperately needed in the elementary schools.

There is reason to believe the selection criteria, data sources, and procedures do have considerable impact upon the composition of the candidate pool. Thus policy makers and school administrators who have a commitment to cultural diversity in the schools will need to carefully assess these elements if they, in fact, are to legitimately effect any significant changes in the schools. Diversity implies differences emanating from social class and ethnic backgrounds, races, religions, handicapping conditions, gender, age, and other culturally related backgrounds. Recent data demonstrate a decline in the diversity of the teaching force. This decline, especially in minority presence, is not solely due to the failure of minorities to enter or complete teacher education programs, but to other factors that dissuade candidates from entering and staying in teaching.

As Sievers (1989) has reported, and as has been found in this study, administrators tend to select teachers who are in essence, clones. The quality indicators they use, as well as the data sources and procedures followed, cause this to occur. It is a forgone conclusion that the K-12 student population in the years to come will be quite different from that which exists today, with many more non-Caucasians and other diverse groups therein. If the teaching force is to reflect the rich diversity of American society and a commitment to an education of quality for *all* children in an interdependent world, then K-12 administrators need to carefully scrutinize their selection criteria, data sources, and procedures to determine the differential impact upon the candidate pool.

IHEs need to carefully analyze their recruitment practices and admission criteria for their preparation programs. It is irrefutable that the admission criteria to teacher education programs clearly focus on academic preparation, and are decidedly different from the quality indicators which K-12 administrators value and use when selecting teachers. These administrators unquestionably depend upon personal qualities such as integrity and moral values, creativity in implementing instruction, emotional stability, level of concern and caring for children/youth, flexibility in working with students and colleagues, willingness to consider divergent ideas/concepts, and high energy and/or motivational level. Assuredly, these personal qualities must, to a large degree, be inherent in the teacher education candidate prior to admission, or they will undoubtedly be non-existent upon completion of the preparation program. Although the teacher education students will have some opportunity to acquire content knowledge about these desirable characteristics, seldom do they become internalized and/or result in the acquisition of new traits or qualities. A similar scenario applies to changes in attitudes. Personal attitudes develop and/or are acquired over extended time periods, and thus are not easily modified or substantively changed during a preparation program.

In its publication titled *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able To Do* the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1990) sets forth five propositions they believe are the core of accomplished teaching, and the actions and abilities that underscore each tenet. The data obtained in this study suggests that the NBPTS needs to perpend about the quality indicators schools administrators believe are the most important and frequently use in the selection process. The respondents in this study believe that the personal qualities are much more important than the academic preparation factors, which now have top priority with NBPTS. If the Board truly implements what is stated in its document, namely "We each remember the great teachers who touched our lives, kindled our interest, and pressed us to do our best.... They exhibited a deep caring and love for children, They conveyed a passion for the subjects they taught... They approached their work with creativity and imagination; striving constantly to improve," (p. 4) NBPTS outcomes will have a high correlation with the findings of this study. Hopefully the NBPTS will undertake serious developmental efforts related to valid and reliable data sources for the establishment of indicators of such qualities. This effort would be of great value to teacher educators, and would lead to the improvement of public school systems. Without question there is a dire need for this seminal professional information.

Professionally speaking, it is reasonable to expect a school district's personnel evaluation processes to utilize performance criteria that are directly related to the quality indicators used in the selection process. Consequently, it is crucial that the administrative and supervisory personnel have objective, valid, and reliable data sources and files. Wherever possible these should be quite similar in nature to those utilized in the selection process.

Since, as reported in *A Closer Look*, the Kansas State Board of Education (1996) has begun a systematic change in its education process with a focus on results, the policy makers need to be especially cognizant of what Kansas administrators believe are quality indicators with respect to teachers. As various school improvement strategies are developed, these important data need to be integrated into the system because of the possible effect on curricula and instructional approaches.

Accrediting bodies in general, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) specifically, which asserts that the 1995 standards were guided by a vision of quality, should find the data from this research effort quite valuable. The quality indicators so highly valued by Kansas administrators embody a dimension of the beginning teacher which is often, unfortunately, relegated by others to a low level priority. This relegation can probably be attributed to the difficulty of effectively implementing such qualitative judgements, at both the entry and exit levels for teacher candidates as NCATE Standards II A & B are applied. The comprehensive system

alluded to in said standards undeniably gives prominence to the assessment of academic proficiency to the detriment of other quality indicators. If this comprehensive system accorded greater inclusion of the personal quality elements, a much more diverse candidate pool would exist.

Recommendations

1. Since school administrators highly value quality indicators which emanate from personal qualities, it is essential that they utilize cogent objective information, and data sources not necessarily now available to them in order to further clarify the attributes of these same personal qualities.

2. Those interested in improving the quality of K-12 schools, whether they are representatives of the business community, elected and appointed governmental officials, philanthropic organizations, parent groups, accrediting agencies, educational professionals as well as others who are advocates of high standards, need to broaden their concept of standards to include many additional qualitative and personal characteristics.

3. If the rich diversity of our American society is to be reflected in the K-12 schools, with a concomitant commitment to educate *all* children, K-12 and institutions of higher education administrators need to carefully examine their selection criteria, data sources, interview practices, and procedures to ascertain any possible differential impact upon the size, characteristics, and quality of the K-12 teacher candidate pool.

4. National and state accrediting agencies, professional organizations, and others seeking to establish and implement high and rigorous standards for education should carefully scrutinize their statements and policies so as to be more inclusive of all valid qualitative and quantitative indicators and personal attributes.

5. The administrators of K-12 schools, and teacher preparation programs, irrespective of size or location, need to regularly exchange and provide research information as to the best selection procedures/practices, data sources and quality indicators which predict subsequent teacher success and/or retention.

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Appendix

QUALITY INDICATORS USED WHEN SELECTING K-12 GRADE TEACHERS

The primary purpose of this brief six-part survey instrument is to determine which *quality indicators* school personnel utilize when selecting teachers for their schools and school systems. When completing this instrument, assume each applicant has as a minimum a bachelors degree and the appropriate certification, but may or may not have had prior teaching experience. Your individual responses will be kept **completely confidential**. All reports based on the information provided will only deal with groups of respondents, not individuals. **If you would like a summary of the study, please check this box** - ☐

PART I

Directions: Please answer each of the following statements by checking the appropriate response or filling in the blank.

School name and zip code _____

1. Type of administrative position you hold
   Bldg.____ Central Office__
2. Gender
   __ Female __ Male
3. Highest degree earned
   __ Bachelors __ Masters __ Specialist __ Doctorate
4. Years of experience as a school administrator ____
5. Which of the following best describes your school?
   __ Elementary __ Middle School __ Junior High School
   __ High School __ Other
6. Number of full time teachers in your school_____ school system _____
7. In what kind of area is your school located?
   __ Rural __ Small city __ Suburban __ Urban
   __ Inner City
8. Your school system's Kansas State High School Activities Association classification _____
9. Number of students in your school _____ school system_____

PART II Indicate the importance you place on each of the listed set of 57 *quality indicators* during the teacher selection process by making two responses. First indicate your USE of each of the 57 types of data in making your final employment decisions when hiring K-12 teachers. Use the following rating scale:

5 - Always used; 4 - Frequently used; 3 - Used occasionally; 2 - Seldom used; 1 - Never used

Second, rate the IMPORTANCE of each *quality indicator* by using the following scale: NOTE: DoP is used to denote IMPORTANCE

5 - Extremely important - Essential; 4 - Very important; 3 - Important; 2 - Of some importance; 1 - Of little or no importance

PART II

		USE	IMP
Academic Preparation			
1	Institution granting the degree		
2	Graduate of an NCATE accredited program		
3	NTE or other standardized test scores		
4	GPA in Professional Educational courses		
5	Overall GPA		
6	Participation in honors courses or programs		
7	Extensiveness of multicultural coursework		
8	Extensiveness/breadth of field-based and student teaching courses/experiences		
9	Depth/breadth of general education courses		
10	Depth/breadth of content specialty courses		
11	Depth/breadth of methods courses		
12	Extensiveness of human growth/development coursework		
13	Inclusion of coursework in testing and assessment		
14	Formal coursework in computer usage and instructional technology		
15	Other (Describe)_____ *Also list in Part IV*		
Experience			
16	Years of teaching experience		
17	Extensiveness of experiences with children or youth outside the collegiate program		
18	Number of years and quality of assignments in non-teaching settings		
19	Professional advancement reflected by an advanced level of certification or continuing education		
20	Expertise as a coach		
Personal Qualities/Data			
21	Unquestionable integrity and moral values		
22	Creativity in implementing instruction		
23	Flexibility in working with students and colleagues		
24	Emotional stability		
25	Level of concern and caring for children/youth		
26	Willingness to consider divergent ideas/concepts		
27	High energy and/or motivation level		
28	Gender		
29	Racial/ethnic background		
30	Oral communication skills		
31	Other (Describe)_____ *Also list in Part IV*		

		USE	IMP
Documentation of Teaching Effectiveness/Potential			
32	Supervisor statements/ratings		
33	Peer/colleague comments		
34	Data from systematic student evaluations		
35	A review of applicant's course syllabi and tests		
36	Formal presentation in a seminar setting during the interview process		
37	Teacher solicited student evaluations		
38	National Board Certified or seeking such certification		
39	SRI Teacher Perceiver Interview System		
Evidence of Scholarship			
40	Elected to offices in professional organizations		
41	Presentations at state/regional/national professional meetings		
42	Involvement in curricula/program development		
43	GRE, MAT or other standardized test scores		
44	Other (Describe)_____ *Also list in Part IV*		
Service Activities			
45	Committee responsibilities as a student at the university level		
46	Committee responsibilities at the school level		
47	Involvement in community service activities (Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, BPW, ect.)		
48	Other (Describe)_____ *Also list in Part IV*		
Candidate's Personal/Professional Development			
49	Enrollment in graduate coursework		
50	Participation in workshops/conferences		
51	Involvement in research activities		
52	Number of endorsement areas_____		
Leadership Potential Qualities			
53	Membership in professional organizations		
54	Performance awards		
55	Committee appointments or assignments within academic community		
56	Performance in assignments that reflect leadership activities		
57	Other (Describe)_____ *Also list in Part IV*		

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PART III

From among all of the 57 *quality indicators* included in the previous eight categories, please list in rank order the ten most important items (e.g., 4, 12, 26...).

1. ___ 2. ___ 3. ___ 4. ___ 5. ___
6. ___ 7. ___ 8. ___ 9. ___ 10. ___

PART IV

If you believe some important *quality indicators* have been omitted, please list them in the spaces below. Also, list any suggestions for, or concerns about, the teacher selection process.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

PART V

Directions: From among the sources/procedures listed below, identify the **five most important** sources of data or indicators you use when hiring K-12 grade teachers. Also, rank order the five sources you identify.

DATA SOURCES/PROCEDURES	IMPORTANCE (Rank order the 5 most important)
1. Contents of an Application Folder	___
2. Applications obtained by nomination or invitation	___
3. Self-initiated applications	___
4. Vita submitted by applicants	___
5. Credential files that are confidential	___
6. Credential files that have been reviewed by the applicants	___
7. Written recommendations obtained by you	___
8. Oral recommendations obtained by you from current or former employers	___
9. Reports submitted by search screening committees	___
10. Teaching portfolios	___
11. Videos of classroom teaching	___
12. Group interviews (e.g., face to face or over the phone)	___
13. Personal interviews	___
14. Seminars involving formal presentations or demonstrations of teaching	___
15. SRI Teacher Perceiver Interview System	___
16. Other _____	___

Part VI

What would you say about the preparation level of today's first year teachers as compared to those prepared five years ago?

___1 Much better prepared
___2 Somewhat better prepared
___3 About the same in preparation
___4 Not quite as well prepared
___5 Not nearly as well prepared

Comments: How would you explain or describe quality differences between today's first-year teachers and those prepared prior to 1990 in terms of their abilities to teach effectively? (e.g. individualized instruction, motivating students, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What are the major shortcomings of today's first year teachers? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP: Remember, if you would like a summary of the survey check the box on the first page and provide your mailing address.

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